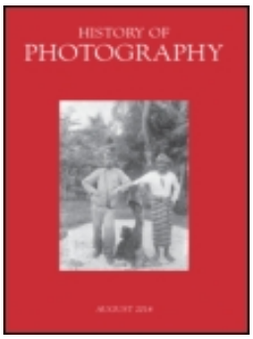

History of Photography

ISSN: 0308-7298 (Print) 2150-7295 (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/thph20

Exposing *The Australians*: Australiana Photobooks of the 1960s

Martyn Jolly

To cite this article: Martyn Jolly (2014) Exposing *The Australians*: Australiana Photobooks of the 1960s, History of Photography, 38:3, 276-295, DOI: 10.1080/03087298.2014.939819

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/03087298.2014.939819

Published online: 08 Aug 2014.

Submit your article to this journal

Article views: 653

View related articles

View Crossmark data

Full Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at
https://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?journalCode=thph20

Exposing *The Australians*: Australiana Photobooks of the 1960s

Martyn Jolly

The role of the photobook has been unjustly neglected in the various histories of Australian photography. However, books primarily illustrated with photographs and celebrating various aspects of Australian life and landscape – 'Australiana' photobooks – have been a fundamental part of the nation's publishing industry since the 1920s. In the postwar decades, and particularly in the 1960s, photobooks were especially important to the course of Australian photography. In the mid-1960s some even aspired to go beyond the well-worn and conventional 'gift book' formats to become integrated visual and written works addressing the crucial national identity issues of the day. In particular, two books – Robert Goodman and George Johnston's *The Australians* (1966) and David Beal and Donald Horne's *Southern Exposure* (1967) – can be seen to have been in dialogue with each other. These books were the highlights of a mini 'photobook boom' that set the stage for Australia's much better known 'photography boom' of the 1970s.

Keywords: *David Moore (1927–2003), Jeff Carter (1928–2010), Mark Strizic (1928–2012), Robert B. Goodman (1933–98), David Beal (1936–), photobooks, Australian photography, 1960s photography, Australiana*

The research for this article was carried out with the support of a National Library of Australia Sir Harold White Fellowship in 2011.

Email for correspondence: martyn.jolly@anu.edu.au

The 1960s saw a mini 'boom' in Australiana photobooks. These publications used photographic layouts combined with text to celebrate Australia's unique landscape and lifestyle, and were intended for purchase either as gifts or as decorative 'coffee table' books. Nowadays the Australiana genre is generally regarded as little more than clichéd, vitiated, repetitive and derivative of once vital landscape and documentary photography traditions; the books themselves have been forgotten, although they were major contributors to the debates about Australian identity that were beginning at the time and are ongoing to the present day. The five key examples discussed below still hold their own as integrated works of photography, design and prose.

In the history of Australian culture, it is not the 1960s but the 1970s that is celebrated as the watershed decade when, following the 1972 election of a socially enlightened Labor government after decades of conservative rule, there was a creative flowering entailing, amongst other things, both a renaissance in the Australian film industry and a 'photography boom' consisting of new photography galleries, photography collections, funding opportunities, and a role for a younger generation of art-school trained photographers.[1] Histories of Australian photography have therefore tended to overlook the 1960s, seeing it as an interregnum between the 1950s – when commercial photographers, many of them European émigrés, set up large studios to service Australia's burgeoning fashion, advertising,

1 – Gael Newton, *Shades of Light: Photography and Australia 1839–1988*, Canberra: Australian National Gallery and Collins Australia 1988; Helen Ennis, *Photography and Australia*, London: Reaktion Books 2007; and Anne-Marie Willis, *Picturing Australia: A History of Photography*, Sydney: Angus & Robertson 1988.

History of Photography, Volume 38, Number 3, August 2014
http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03087298.2014.939819
© 2014 Taylor & Francis

architectural and design industries – and the countercultural 1970s – when a new wave of eager young photographers began to push photography towards the centre of Australian art. However, if historical attention is focused on the many photobooks that were produced, distributed, bought and read in large numbers in the 1960s, the picture formed in that period, not only of Australian photography but also of Australian culture as a whole, deepens considerably.

There had been an intermittent, although growing trickle of Australiana photobooks in the decades before the 1960s. These included the tourist-style scenery books of Harold Cazneaux and Frank Hurley,[2] the large-format government-commissioned commemorative volumes of the publisher Oswald Ziegler,[3] and high-quality corporate promotions, which especially commissioned modernist European-trained émigré photographers such as Wolfgang Sievers.[4] In the 1960s, however, books began to be published that were larger in format and which integrated text, image and design even more closely. In addition, these books were no longer simply about picturesque scenery, or worthy propaganda flattering the progress of this or that municipality, or extolling the products of this or that manufacturing company – they were about Australia itself. They began to be timely, about Australian society in the 1960s, rather than timeless or about a generic Australia. They were quite explicitly about the new Australian identity that was emerging in the postwar period.

Driving this change was unprecedented wealth flowing from a mining boom, continuing mass migration from Southern Europe and, as evidenced by an escalating commitment to the Vietnam War from 1966, a cultural and geopolitical realignment towards the USA and away from the British Empire. As a recent study of Australia's search for its national identity has stated:

> From the mid-1960s, with a dwindling material basis for imperial sentiment, Australians were confronted with the task of remaking their nation in the wake of empire. It was a problem that touched every aspect of Australian life where identifiably 'British' ideas, symbols, motifs, precepts and practices demanded remodelling. It was most clearly in evidence in the visual realm of icons and imagery […]. The question of what, when and how to celebrate Australia's past achievements became an unprecedented source of public controversy and political hand-wringing, as community leaders strove to find the appropriate language and rhetoric to invoke the coming nation. Above all, it was in Australia's dealings with the world outside that a new set of post-imperial markers were deemed necessary. […] More often than not, the recurring debate about the national image was rooted in perceptions – real or imagined – of how outsiders viewed Australia, and the kinds of signals Australians ought to be transmitting abroad.[5]

This gave rise to what became known, in a term coined by the social commentator Donald Horne, as the 'new nationalism'.[6] Despite this broad-based cultural foment, the Australian film industry would not undergo its full, structural renaissance until the mid-1970s. There were only a handful of feature films made in Australia during the 1960s, mostly by overseas directors.[7] However, although Australian feature films were few in number, at least sixty significant Australiana photobooks were published during the same period. Looking back on this period from 1970, the novelist and journalist George Johnston commented: 'I think it is significant that the rise over the past twenty years of a new, different, technological Australia runs almost parallel with the startling increase in and acceptance of books about Australia'. The magazine quoting him added: 'Perhaps there is also evidence that Australians are looking for an "instant heritage"'.[8]

The 1960s also saw a radical increase in the number of small, independent, 'start-up' publishers in Australia. The new publishers Rigby, Landsdowne, Nelson and Jacaranda all sought a slice of the boom in book sales. The value of Australian publishing increased eight-fold between 1961 and 1979, and from 1961 to 1971 membership of the Australian Book Publishers Association increased from thirty-

2 – For instance, see Harold Cazneaux and Jean Curlewis, *Sydney Harbour*, Sydney: Art in Australia 1928; Harold Cazneaux and Jean Curlewis, *Sydney Surfing*, Sydney: Art in Australia 1929; Harold Cazneaux, *The Bridge Book*, Sydney: Sydney Ure Smith for Art in Australia 1930; and Harold Cazneaux, *The Australian Native Bear Book: Photographs*, Sydney: Sydney Ure Smith 1930. Other precursors include Frank Hurley's 'Camera Study' scenery books focusing on each state and major city in Australia, which continued to be published even after his death in 1962. See Frank Hurley, *Australia: A Camera Study*, Sydney: Angus and Robertson 1955 (and thereafter 1959, 1961 and 1966 editions); and Frank Hurley, *Sydney: A Camera Study*, Sydney: Angus and Robertson 1948 and 1958.

3 – *Australia, 1788–1938: 150 Years*, Sydney: Oswald Ziegler 1938; *This is Australia*, ed. Oswald Ziegler and Australian Department of Information, Sydney: Oswald Ziegler in association with Gotham 1946; and *Jubilee of the Commonwealth of Australia: Official Commemorative Book*, ed. Oswald Ziegler and the Australian News and Information Bureau, Sydney: Oswald Ziegler Publications 1951. See also Eric Riddler, 'Oswald Ziegler and the Commercial Application of Contemporary Australian Photography in the mid Twentieth Century', Fine Arts IV Thesis, Power Institute of Fine Arts, University of Sydney 1990.

4 – Examples include *The James Miller Story*, in which the dramatically modernist photographs of German émigré Wolfgang Sievers and the bold layouts of Hungarian émigré Frank Eidlitz succeeded in making even that most old-fashioned of industries – rope making – appear glossy, glamorous and modern. *The James Miller Story*, Melbourne: James Miller & Co. 1962; and Wolfgang Sievers, *Good, Better, Best Never Rest, Till Good Be Better, and Better Best*, Melbourne: Balm Paints [1961].

5 – James Curran and Stuart Ward, *The Unknown Nation: Australia After Empire*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press 2010, 5.

6 – Donald Horne, 'The New Nationalism?', *Bulletin* (5 October 1968), cited in Curran and Ward, *The Unknown Nation*, 5.

7 – For example, Leslie Norman, *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* (Hill-Hecht-Lancaster Productions 1959); Michael Powell, *They're a Weird Mob* (Williamson/Powell 1966); Michael Powell, *Age of Consent* (Nautilus Productions 1969); Nicolas Roeg, *Walkabout* (Max L. Raab Productions 1971); and Ted Kotcheff, *Wake in Fright* (Group W 1971).

8 – John Currey, 'Australian Books Are Selling FAST!', *Walkabout* (March 1970), 12–15.

seven to sixty-seven, of which nearly forty were Australian owned.[9] The various debates of 'new nationalism' played themselves out across the Australian publishing industry during this period, with landmark texts on many different aspects of Australian identity, from urban environments to Australian history, being widely read and discussed.[10] The titles of some of these books, such as *The Lucky Country* (1964) and *The Tyranny of Distance* (1966), have even entered everyday Australian speech.

Mark Strizic's Melbourne: A Portrait

Not only did the pace of book production begin to accelerate in the early 1960s, and Australian books by Australian authors become the central arena for national identity debates, but the new economics of the industry also encouraged an adventurous, entrepreneurial attitude on the part of publishers, writers, designers and illustrators. In this context, photographers began to enliven the publishing landscape. For instance, the venerable publisher Angus & Robertson produced *Piccaninny Walkabout* (1957), a children's book shot on an Aboriginal mission by Axel Poignant, which told its story – of two traditional Aboriginal children lost in the bush – almost entirely in photographs and with a minimum of text. The book won that year's Children's Book of the Year: Picture Book Award, a category usually awarded to books illustrated with drawings.[11]

Four years later another photobook won the Australian Book Publishers Association Book of the Year award. *Melbourne: A Portrait* (1960) is still a charming object even today.[12] The émigré photographer Mark Strizic had worked with the architectural critic, historian and university lecturer David Saunders and the small publishing company Georgian House on producing a photobook about Melbourne. Although modestly scaled and priced, the book did not lack ambition. Saunders's text was repeated in Italian and German, envisaging a global market for images of cosmopolitan Melbourne. The citation to the Book of the Year award recognised the integrated design of the book package:

> This book of photographs, printed by offset, is an outstanding production. All the illustrations have an attractive softness. Not often is text printed by offset so clearly and evenly carried out. The preliminary pages have been well treated and refreshingly break away from the stereotyped pattern.[13]

The judges' comments pointed to one major technological change, which was leading to the expansion of photobooks during this period: offset printing. As opposed to letterpress printing, offset printing allowed text and image to be more cheaply, conveniently and intricately integrated on the one page, while retaining photographic quality and textual clarity. Strizic's softly sunlit, almost Pictorialist, but nonetheless cleanly composed photographs translated well to the pages via offset. As the book's designer, Strizic was able to freely move the rectangular photographs up and down or across the square pages so that the composition of one visually interlocked with the composition of the next, while expansive fields of blank paper, which sometimes also included floating lines of text, brought each consecutive double-page spread together into a different graphic composition visually relating to the subject matter of the photographs. For instance, in paired photographs on pages eighteen and nineteen, the photographer looks down on commuting Melbournians from a set of railway station steps, and enhances their sense of dispersed bustle by not only cropping them within his camera, but also bleeding the two images to opposite sides of the double-page spread, leaving in the centre a blank but visually animated space, free for floating fragments of text (figure 1).

Strizic acknowledged that the inspiration for *Melbourne: A Portrait* came from a book called *Light and Shade*, published by his father on his adopted home of Zagreb in 1955.[14] It was clearly to this more contemplative, atmospheric and

9 – Frank Thompson, 'Sixties Larrikins', in *Paper Empires: A History of the Book in Australia, 1946–2005*, ed. Craig Munro and Robyn Sheahan-Bright, St Lucia, Brisbane: University of Queensland Press 2001, 32–52.

10 – These included a bestselling postwar migration novel, which sold 300,000 copies in three years (John O'Grady, *They're a Weird Mob: A Novel*, Sydney: Ure Smith 1957), critiques of Australia's urban environment (Robin Boyd, *The Australian Ugliness*, Melbourne: Cheshire 1960), discussion of the supposed success of Australia's assimilation policies (Douglas Lockwood and Waipuldanya, *I, the Aboriginal*, Adelaide: Rigby 1962), critiques of how Australia's wealth and provincialism had made it uninspiring and indolent (Donald Horne, *The Lucky Country: Australia in the Sixties*, Ringwood, Melbourne: Penguin 1964), discussion of the country's changing ethnic and age demography (Craig McGregor, *Profile of Australia*, London: Hodder and Stoughton 1966), and new approaches to thinking about Australian history in a world context (Geoffrey Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance Shaped Australia's History*, Melbourne: Sun Books 1966).

11 – Axel Poignant, *Piccaninny Walkabout: A Story of Two Aboriginal Children*, Sydney: Angus and Robertson 1957.

12 – Mark Strizic and David Saunders, *Melbourne: A Portrait*, Melbourne: Georgian House 1960.

13 – Unpaginated citation, Mark Strizic Photographer File, Pictures and Manuscripts Collection, National Library of Australia.

14 – Unpaginated resume, Mark Strizic Photographer File, Pictures and Manuscripts Collection, National Library of Australia.

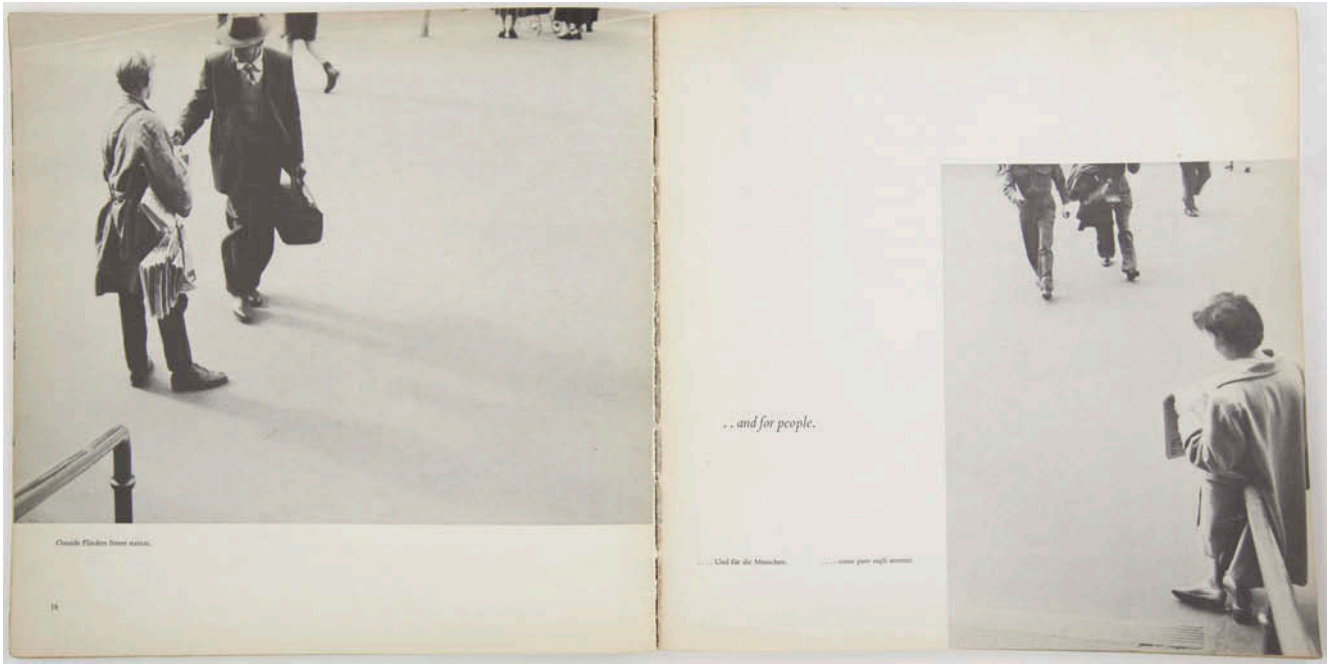

Figure 1. Mark Strizic, *Outside Flinders Street Station*, ca. 1960. From *Melbourne: A Portrait*, Melbourne: Georgian House 1961, 18–19.

European modernist style of 'city book' that Strizic aspired, rather than the loud, graphically congested civic eulogies of the many photobooks about Australian cities and states published at the time. *The Age* newspaper stated: 'It gives a truer picture of Melbourne than a book of more glossily conceived and executed pictures could ever do. It also gives a picture of an exciting and a vital city'.[15] The *Melbourne Truth* also compared it favourably with the other promotional books:

> Melbourne's old familiar places, caught and held by the art of the camera, come alive with fresh beauty. […] In comparison, the glossy production of the Victorian Promotion Committee, *Melbourne – Big, Rich, Beautiful*, sinks to the level of a singing commercial.[16]

To them its 'friendly and intimate' style was more persuasive than the brash boosterism of official publications.

15 – Richard Troy, 'Portrait of a City: A Melbourne Camera Study', *The Age* (2 February 1961), n.p.

16 – 'The Real Melbourne – Alive, Beautiful', *Melbourne Truth* (2 December 1960), n.p.

Robert Goodman's The Australians

In 1962, a *National Geographic* photographer, Robert Goodman, came to Australia to work with their Tasmanian-born staff writer Alan Villiers on a major article, subsequently published in the September 1963 issue.[17] Whilst in Australia, Goodman assisted the Australian documentary photographers Jeff Carter and David Moore in gaining *National Geographic* commissions for themselves. Carter's 'The Alice in Australia's Wonderland' was published in 1966, and Moore's 'New South Wales: The State That Cradled Australia' in 1967.[18] Goodman conceived the idea (reportedly one afternoon whilst lying in an Alice Springs hotel room) of producing a high production value coffee-table photobook about Australia for a global, rather than just a domestic, market.[19]

Goodman, an extraordinarily energetic entrepreneur, gained the support of a series of companies, which were persuaded of the benefit of having a photobook to promote Australia in general, and their industry in particular. Twelve leading travel, mining, banking and manufacturing companies made $150,000 Australian dollars available over three years to finance the book, in return for ten thousand copies to be used as promotional gifts. The companies included Qantas, the

17 – Alan Villiers, 'Australia', *National Geographic* (September 1963), 309–87.

18 – Alan Villiers, '"The Alice" in Australia's Wonderland', *National Geographic* (February 1966), 230–57; and Howell Walker, 'New South Wales: The State that Cradled Australia', *National Geographic* (November 1967), 591–635.

19 – Keith Newman, 'Manufacturing Industry Plays Key Role on Australian Made Book's Phenomenal Success', *Impetus Annual*, Chamber of Manufactures of New South Wales (January 1967), 4.

National Travel Association, Alcoa, Ansett Airlines, Associated Pulp and Paper, Broken Hill Proprietary (BHP), Commonwealth Bank, Felt and Textiles, International Business Machines (IBM), International Harvester, Mutual Life and Citizens Assurance Company, Pacific & Oriental (P&O), and H. C. Sleigh. As Goodman declared: 'This was public relations at the highest level'.[20]

Goodman returned to Australia to prepare the book in 1964. He met the novelist George Johnston, who had just returned from living abroad for fourteen years and whose just-published sentimental autobiographical novel *My Brother Jack* (1964) was receiving critical and popular acclaim.[21] Johnston agreed to write the text for Goodman's project. Although many photobooks of this period were making use of the new Asian printers in Hong Kong, Japan and Singapore, Goodman ensured quality control by using the Adelaide independent publisher Rigby and the Adelaide printery Griffin Press, which had previously published Strizic's book and was known for its quality, in order to have control over the colour separation, plate production, and paper quality. This control is indeed palpable in the final product; there is wide variation in the print quality of 1960s photobooks, but *The Australians* is clearly the best example of the era.[22]

Goodman had also made important media connections during his first visit, including with the middle-class travel magazine *Walkabout*. A year before the book's publication, *Walkabout* began to build anticipation for it by covering Goodman's travels with his wife around Australia as a photo-story in its own right.[23] In the prelude to the release date, the publishers took out a series of advertisements in the booksellers' trade journal *Ideas*. Each advertisement was illustrated with the book's cover image of the open face of a weathered stockman gazing frankly ahead (figure 2). The accompanying text promised 'Australia's greatest single volume publishing achievement' and 'a stunning experience, an intensely personal book about a land and its people'.[24]

When it was finally released in September 1966, *The Australians* was supported by an unprecedented publicity blitz, with articles and mentions in almost every magazine including the lowbrow *Pix*, the middle-class *Women's Weekly*, the travel magazine *Walkabout*, the amateur photographer's magazine *Australian Photography*, the fashionable *Vogue Australia*, as well as several newspapers. The coverage was tailored to each magazine; *Women's Weekly*, for instance, highlighted the support of Goodman's wife and young son, while *Australian Photography* displayed all of the Nikon camera gear the photographer had used.[25] Even with the assistance of the copies given to the corporate sponsors, sales were excellent, helped by the subsidised price of $7.95 Australian dollars. After its first edition of thirty-five thousand copies sold out, *The Australians* went through several editions, eventually staying in the bestseller list for a total of fourteen months and remaining in print until well into the 1970s. By 1970 the book had sold ninety thousand copies, and in 1972, six years after first being published, Rigby gave it a new lease of life with a redesigned, more compact edition.[26]

The impact the book made was further increased by two exhibitions, each consisting of sixty-six photographs printed to a maximum size of 150 cm × 100 cm. One of these exhibitions was organised for overseas display for the Australian government, and the other for domestic display for the airline Ansett-ANA. *The Australians* became a favourite corporate and government gift, with the Queen and President Johnson receiving copies bound in merino sheep skin. Enlargements from the book also became the centrepiece of the organically shaped, modernist architecture of Australia's pavilion at Expo '67 in Montreal. Australia's participation was the most expensive promotional event the Australian government had ever staged overseas. Its aim, according to the then Prime Minister Harold Holt, was to 'project Australia to the world'.[27] Robin Boyd, Australia's leading modernist architect of the era, designed the pavilion to demonstrate Australia's progression 'from the stone age to the space age in less than two centuries'.[28] Goodman's photographs, mounted inside futuristic 'trumpets', showed contemporary,

20 – 'Art, Design & Elegance in Industry: First Place to *The Australians*', *Impetus Annual*, Chamber of Manufactures of New South Wales (January 1967), 1.

21 – George Johnston, *My Brother Jack*, London: Collins 1964.

22 – Robert Goodman, George Johnston, and Jonathan Rinehart, *The Australians*, Adelaide: Rigby 1966.

23 – Henry Strasbourg, 'Making the Australians', *Walkabout* (September 1965), 30–34.

24 – *Ideas* (15 July 1966), 29; and *Ideas* (16 September 1966), 37.

25 – 'The Book that Looks Inside Us and Tells Us Who We Are', *Pix* (24 September 1966), 28–31; 'People are Talking About … *The Australians*', *Australian Vogue* (October 1966), 88; 'Nikon System Paved the Way for Bob Goodman's Epic Book', *Australian Photography* (September 1966), 9–12; and 'American's View of Australia', *Women's Weekly* (14 September 1966), 12–13.

26 – Currey, 'Australian Books Are Selling FAST!', 13.

27 – Curran and Ward, *The Unknown Nation*, 97.

28 – Ibid., 101.

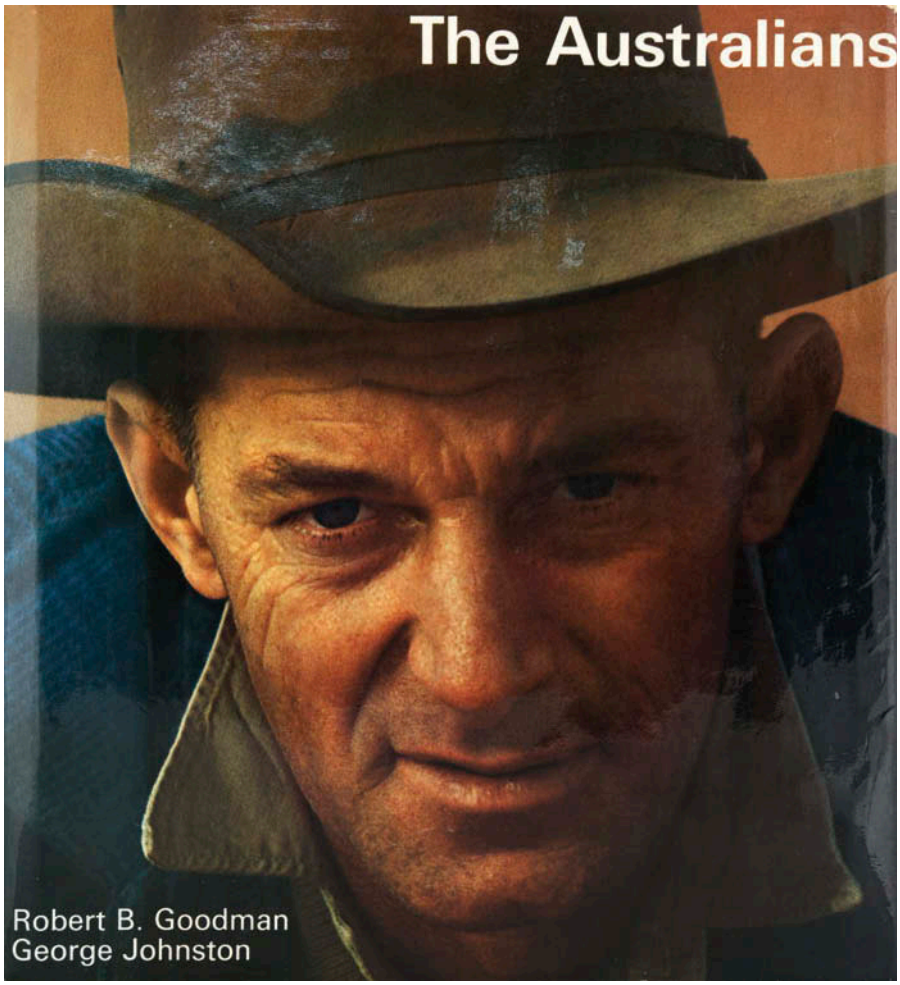

Figure 2. Robert Goodman, *The Australians* cover, image ca. 1964. From Robert Goodman, *The Australians*, Adelaide: Rigby 1966.

cosmopolitan Australians enjoying art shows and sporting events juxtaposed with images of spectacular Australian nature (figure 3).[29] The book also received international coverage from the US *Look* magazine as well as the UK *Queen* magazine and other European journals. Goodman reported to his corporate investors that the value of this free publicity alone for Australia was worth three million dollars.[30]

As well as the book's unprecedented production values, the other significant shift was its subject matter. This photobook was not about the continent of Australia and its inhabitants, but about the people of Australia as formed by their continent. The empty urban and pastoral vistas that had dominated previous photobooks – images of imperial potentiality by photographers like Frank Hurley – were replaced with landscapes of faces. For instance, when we turn from page 123, containing a vertical colour image of distant street pedestrians walking beneath a British flag, to the next, the reader is confronted with a double-page, full-bleed spread of a starkly lit, black and white close-up photograph of three southern European faces looking ahead with keen, lip-biting trepidation – 'Immigrant Arrivals, Sydney Harbour', the caption tells us (figure 4). This photograph describes the demographic changes occurring in Australia with a startling telephoto intimacy unprecedented in previous books. (The image was copied about a year later by David Moore on his assignment for *National Geographic*, but while Moore's version, *Migrants Arriving in Sydney* [1966], eventually became a national icon, Goodman's was forgotten.)

The modernist designer Harry Williamson, a typographer who had trained at the London School of Printing, designed the book. Goodman and Williamson

29 – Ann Stephen and Philip Goad, 'Good Evening America: Australia's Pavilion Diplomacy', in *Modern Times: The Untold Story of Modernism in Australia*, ed. Ann Stephen, Philip Goad and Andrew McNamara, Melbourne: The Miegunyah Press 2008, 183.

30 – Newman, 'Manufacturing Industry Plays Key Role', 12; and H. Strasburger, 'Goodman's Australia', *The Australian* (24 September 1966), 11.

Figure 3. Unknown photographer, *Main Floor of the Australian Pavilion at Expo '67 Montreal*, 1967. From the collection of the National Archives of Australia, NAA: AA1982/206/43.

sea to signify that he will nevermore return. It is a symbolic cutting of all terrestrial ties with home. Yet how much there is of his birthplace that he brings with him, how much in his heart that will go on aching and yearning for the established certainties and old assurances that he left behind.
It is said that the two most tremendous experiences of anyone's life are being born and dying. The third must surely be the sharp and anxious moment of a total commitment to a new life in a remote and alien country.
We cannot expect them – lonely and uneasy, needing time and friendliness

Figure 4. Robert Goodman, *Immigrant Arrivals, Sydney Harbour*, ca. 1964. From *The Australians*, Adelaide: Rigby 1966, 124–25.

worked together projecting slides onto an enlarger baseboard. Goodman even returned to Kodachrome rolls he had used in 1962 on his first trip to Australia, but flipped them and re-cropped them. Williamson established a unifying design grid based on the shape of Goodman's 35mm slides, which cleaned up and

de-cluttered each spread while establishing a continuity throughout the book. He regularly punctuated the reader's progress with dramatic double-page images; however, these spreads were not of vast distant landscapes or urban ravines, but of the faces, and most significantly the gazes, of Australians (figure 5). Williamson also worked closely with the New York-based former *Newsweek* editor Jonathan Rinehart who Goodman had hired to help edit the text and image together so that 'the book, in its final expression would be neither picture nor word book, but rather a beautifully intertwined volume with a unity all of its own'.[31] Williamson said of his design for *The Australians*:

> I believe it was quite a major statement in design. I tried to produce an integrated statement, to relate the pictures to the words and also to work to a specific grid which I designed, based on Bob Goodman's 35mm shape. I could bleed the 35mm shape across on to the next page and it conditioned the column of text, generating a continuity throughout the book. I learned quite a bit about tuning things up from an editor from Newsweek [Jonathan Rinehart] who we used to edit the text. I'd do things in a rough sort of way, but he'd say 'Look, we're going to end every story on a big red shot, or … we're always going to start this way.' Although my grid was rational, I learned a lot from him about structure, about orchestration of pictures and that sort of thing.[32]

Williamson also used colour with confidence. For instance, the series of vertical slices arrayed across pages 256 and 257 conducts a kind of kind of typological census – in pink, yellow and red – of three generations of Australian womanhood at the Melbourne Cup (figure 6).

The flavour of *The Australians* was determined by its international context.[33] In keeping with the new nationalism's concern with overseas perceptions of Australia, the fact that Goodman was a visiting American was articulated by the publicity as an advantage – as an unprejudiced but internationally knowledgeable outsider, he had an advantage in seeing Australians as they really were. The book was not only photographed by a former *National Geographic* photographer, designed by a London-trained designer, and edited by a New York-based editor, but it was also narrated by a famous writer returning home after fourteen prodigal years as an expatriate. The bulk of Johnston's text was a sequence of potted history chapters. These chapters followed a trajectory familiar from many other Australiana photobooks – from the 'Land' to the 'People' to 'Industry', to 'Arts', to 'Sport' and finally to 'Anzac' – but they were given personal colour by a series of short written vignettes mixing Johnston's nostalgic recollections with anecdotes and social speculation.[34] These paralleled the photographs quite closely, so text and image informed each other. For instance, page eighty-four features 'Lunch hour, Hyde Park downtown Sydney' – at first glance, an internationally generic image of two men smoking and reading a newspaper on a park bench. However, the text on the opposite page directs the reader to the intrinsically Australian qualities of their ordinariness:

> And in Australian cities people dress, talk, saunter, obey, lounge, loll, drink, woo and walk like each other and at the same time like nobody anywhere else in the world. The simplest of generalisations is that Australians and Americans are the two most instantly identifiable peoples of the western world. After ten years of living in Europe I could on a Mediterranean waterfront unerringly recognize from 150 yards away an Australian arriving on the noonday steamer. When I returned to my native land I had been absent for almost fourteen years. Yet everywhere I looked they were the same people I had recognised from the quayside, but infinitely multiplied. The first vivid impressions of homecoming I have not had reason to change.[35]

Reviews confirmed that *The Australians* had set a benchmark because of the physical quality of the book, and because it broadened the themes and issues which could be encompassed by an Australiana photobook. *Walkabout*'s review of *The*

31 – Newman, 'Manufacturing Industry Plays Key Role', 1.

32 – Geoffrey Caban, *A Fine Line: A History of Australian Commercial Art*, Sydney: Hale & Iremonger 1983, 117.

33 – Following the success of *The Australians*, the team of Goodman, Williamson and Rinehart worked together on another book called *The Hawaiians*, modelled very closely on *The Australians*. Robert Goodman, George Johnston, and Jonathan Rinehart, *The Hawaiians*, Norfolk Island: Island Heritage 1970.

34 – 'Anzac' originally stood for the 'Australia and New Zealand Army Corps', but since the First World War it has become the name of the militaristic and commemorative tradition that has been fundamental to the creation of an Australian national identity.

35 – Goodman, Johnston, and Rinehart, *The Australians*, 84.

the driven or self-elected expatriates,
are returning to the creative
challenge and ferment of their own
country . . .
A great flood of creative activity is
building and spreading to all
corners of our land. And it is in
this fact that our true poetry lies.
It swells past the hedges of suburbia,
beyond assembly lines and the new
blank verse of automation. Painters
here are not only in the pads and
flats and cottages of the cities,
but scattered to the edge of the
tropic canefields and the islands of
the Reef, to the mountains and the
old gold towns and cattle stations.
The expression of what they are
searching for lies on the canvas
clean, bright, vibrant and brave.
A perceptive English writer has
remarked on the exuberant vitality
and young freshness of the colours.
218
PILSENER

Figure 5. Robert Goodman, *Russell and Maise Drysdale in his studio, Sydney, New South Wales*, ca. 1964. From *The Australians*, Adelaide: Rigby 1966, 218–19.

Figure 6. Robert Goodman, *Lady Spectators, Melbourne Cup*, ca. 1964. From *The Australians*, Adelaide: Rigby 1966, 256–57.

Australians picked up on the book's design sophistication and the closeness of the collaboration: 'His running text, which parallels the pictures, is a successful exercise in verbal interpretation which manages to avoid any trace of redundancy'.[36] For the bookseller trade journal *Ideas*, this was a photobook with profound things to say about the national character of Australians who were developmentally caught between country and city: 'Both text and photographs reveal the outback – the back breaking pioneer character of the country which lead to the mateship quality of its inhabitants [as well as] the present-day, suburban, industrialized situation, which now leaves a question mark hanging over the character of today's Australians'.[37] H. G. Kippax, however, writing in the new quality broadsheet newspaper *The Australian*, exalted the book's fundamentally optimistic and nationalistic message. Although the faces in the book had 'the sun cracked texture of parched land', they nonetheless 'did us proud' in a way 'that may seem oddly old fashioned in these days of national self analysis and criticism'.[38]

36 – 'The Australians', *Walkabout* (September 1966), n.p.

37 – *Ideas* (17 October 1966), 34.

38 – H. G. Kippax, 'An American View of Australia', *The Australian* (10 September 1966), 18.

David Beal's Southern Exposure

The extraordinary success of *The Australians* prompted a series of replies from other publishers, as well as a series of attempts to jump on the Australiana bandwagon. The most trenchant reply came from the publisher Collins, which produced *Southern Exposure* in 1967, with a text by Donald Horne, who was to coin the term 'new nationalism' a year later and whose ironically entitled *The Lucky Country* had been a talking point since its publication three years before, and photographs by David Beal, whose black and white images, many of which had been previously published in magazines like *Walkabout*, had heavy doses of the gritty documentary acerbity of Bill Brandt and Robert Frank. The dust-jacket blurb states its intention clearly:

> *Southern Exposure* is the most original picture book on Australia yet to be published. It marks a departure from the stereotyped, quasi-official, 'coffee table' productions which portray in verbal and visual clichés an idealised picture of Australia. As Donald Horne says in his forward: 'Neither of us – photographer or writer – could be bothered producing the ordinary kind of picture book on Australia. There are no photographs of koala bears in gum trees here […]. We are trying to get down in pictures and words the Australia we see.[39]

39 – Donald Horne and David Beal, *Southern Exposure*, Sydney: Collins 1967, dust jacket.

The cover images are just as explicit, and almost satirical. A beer-gutted Australian worker holds a shovel but incongruously licks an ice cream – almost a visual encapsulation of the argument of *The Lucky Country* – while on the back cover the 'real' Australia remains cracked and parched (figure 7). The faces in *The Australians* were frontal and open with level gazes, whereas the faces in *Southern Exposure* are belligerent or turned away. Their mouths are plugged with bottles, cans or cigarettes (figure 8). As in the dust cover, the book is full of sly and sardonic puns. A visiting English actress's bejewelled décolletage at an opening night transmutes with the turn of the page to an empty beer glass shoved down a female pub drinker's blouse (figures 9, 10).

The book concludes with a sequence of two photographs of empty boats on dry land – one in the outback, the other in a suburb – implying that rather than being the opposing poles of its national identity, both the bush and the suburbs were places where Australians were equally marooned. Other images, such as bleached animal skeletons, a major visual trope of postwar Australian iconography in painting and photography, seem to be out to trump Goodman's more glamorised depictions. Compared with the ragged imprecation of Beal's desiccated kangaroo on page twenty-three of *Southern Exposure*, Goodman's 'Dead Ram, Witchelina Station, South Australia' on page twenty-five of *The Australians* begins

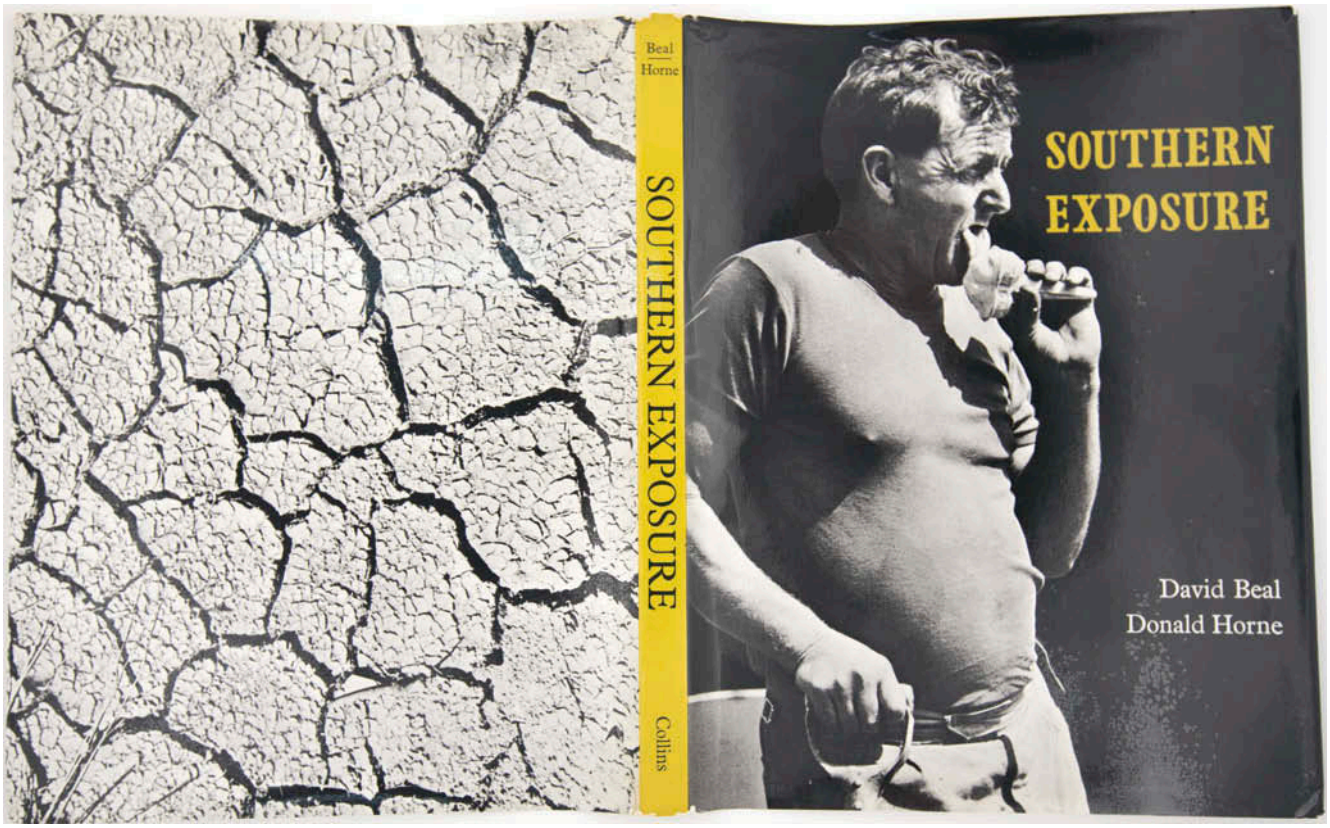

Figure 7. David Beal and Donald Horne, *Southern Exposure* front and back covers, ca. 1966. From David Beal and Donald Horne, *Southern Exposure*, Sydney: Collins 1967.

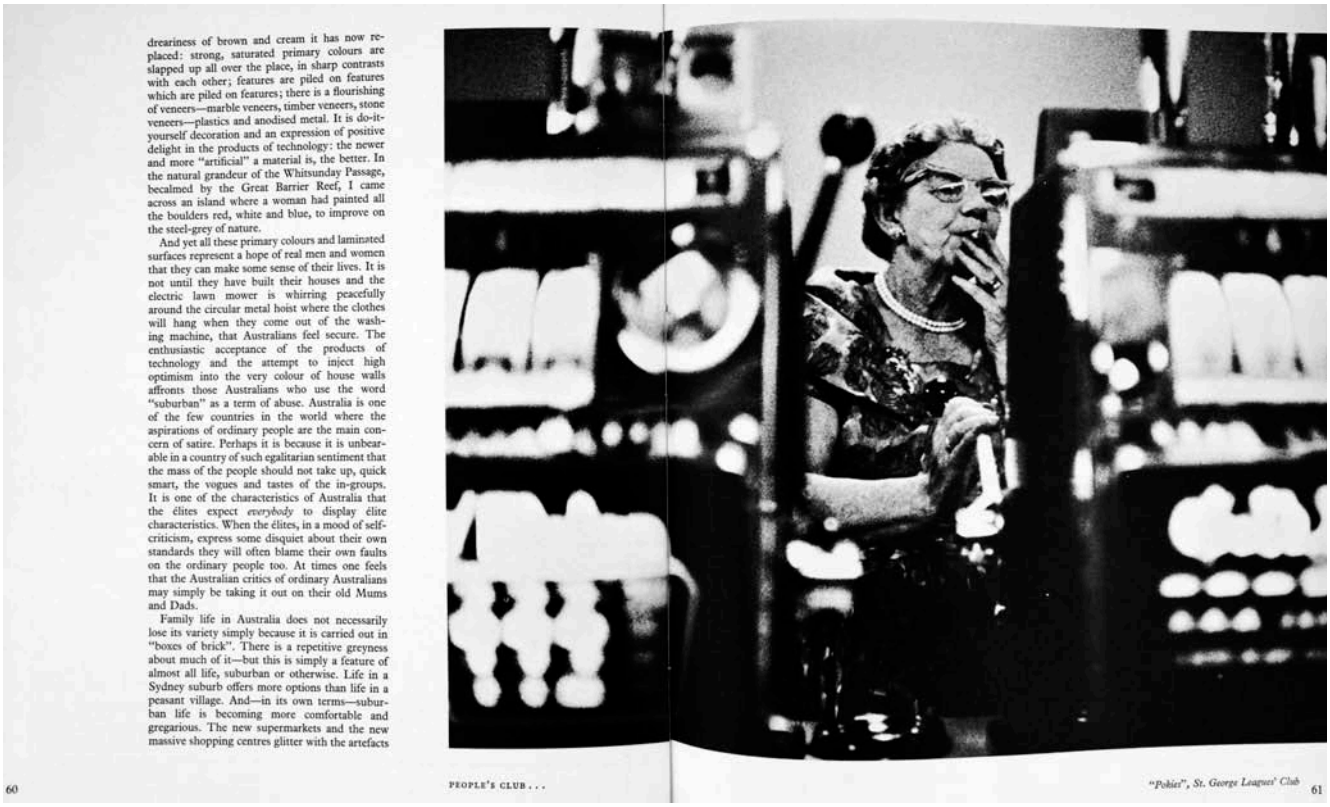
dreariness of brown and cream it has now replaced: strong, saturated primary colours are slapped up all over the place, in sharp contrasts with each other; features are piled on features which are piled on features; there is a flourishing of veneers—marble veneers, timber veneers, stone veneers—plastics and anodised metal. It is do-it-yourself decoration and an expression of positive delight in the products of technology: the newer and more "artificial" a material is, the better. In the natural grandeur of the Whitsunday Passage, becalmed by the Great Barrier Reef, I came across an island where a woman had painted all the boulders red, white and blue, to improve on the steel-grey of nature.
And yet all these primary colours and laminated surfaces represent a hope of real men and women that they can make some sense of their lives. It is not until they have built their houses and the electric lawn mower is whirring peacefully around the circular metal hoist where the clothes will hang when they come out of the washing machine, that Australians feel secure. The enthusiastic acceptance of the products of technology and the attempt to inject high optimism into the very colour of house walls affronts those Australians who use the word "suburban" as a term of abuse. Australia is one of the few countries in the world where the aspirations of ordinary people are the main concern of satire. Perhaps it is because it is unbearable in a country of such egalitarian sentiment that the mass of the people should not take up, quick smart, the vogues and tastes of the in-groups. It is one of the characteristics of Australia that the élites expect *everybody* to display élite characteristics. When the élites, in a mood of self-criticism, express some disquiet about their own standards they will often blame their own faults on the ordinary people too. At times one feels that the Australian critics of ordinary Australians may simply be taking it out on their old Mums and Dads.
Family life in Australia does not necessarily lose its variety simply because it is carried out in "boxes of brick". There is a repetitive greyness about much of it—but this is simply a feature of almost all life, suburban or otherwise. Life in a Sydney suburb offers more options than life in a peasant village. And—in its own terms—suburban life is becoming more comfortable and gregarious. The new supermarkets and the new massive shopping centres glitter with the artefacts
60
PEOPLE'S CLUB . . .
"Pokies", St. George Leagues' Club
61

Figure 8. David Beal, *'Pokies', St George Leagues Club*, ca. 1966. From David Beal and Donald Horne, *Southern Exposure*, Sydney: Collins 1967, 60–61.

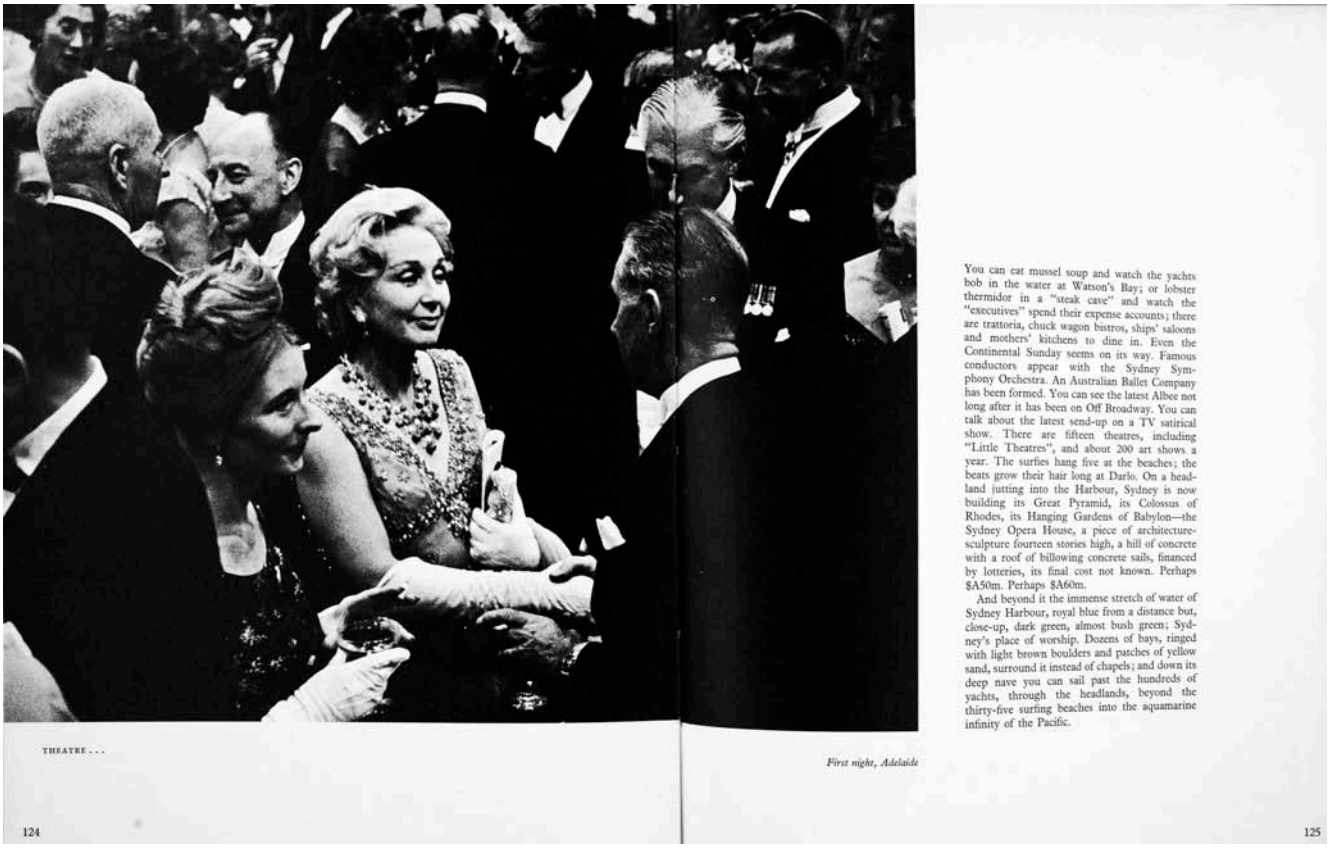
THEATRE . . .
First night, Adelaide
You can eat mussel soup and watch the yachts bob in the water at Watson's Bay; or lobster thermidor in a "steak cave" and watch the "executives" spend their expense accounts; there are trattoria, chuck wagon bistros, ships' saloons and mothers' kitchens to dine in. Even the Continental Sunday seems on its way. Famous conductors appear with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. An Australian Ballet Company has been formed. You can see the latest Albee not long after it has been on Off Broadway. You can talk about the latest send-up on a TV satirical show. There are fifteen theatres, including "Little Theatres", and about 200 art shows a year. The surfies hang five at the beaches; the beats grow their hair long at Darlo. On a headland jutting into the Harbour, Sydney is now building its Great Pyramid, its Colossus of Rhodes, its Hanging Gardens of Babylon—the Sydney Opera House, a piece of architecture-sculpture fourteen stories high, a hill of concrete with a roof of billowing concrete sails, financed by lotteries, its final cost not known. Perhaps $A50m. Perhaps $A60m.
And beyond it the immense stretch of water of Sydney Harbour, royal blue from a distance but, close-up, dark green, almost bush green; Sydney's place of worship. Dozens of bays, ringed with light brown boulders and patches of yellow sand, surround it instead of chapels; and down its deep nave you can sail past the hundreds of yachts, through the headlands, beyond the thirty-five surfing beaches into the aquamarine infinity of the Pacific.
124
125

Figure 9. David Beal, *First Night, Adelaide*, ca. 1966. From David Beal and Donald Horne, *Southern Exposure*, Sydney: Collins 1967, 124–25.

Figure 10. David Beal, untitled, ca. 1966. From David Beal and Donald Horne, *Southern Exposure*, Sydney: Collins 1967, 126.

to look almost choreographed (figures 11, 12). Beal's returned Anzac soldiers, rather than looking weary but quaintly proud as in Goodman, just look smug and slovenly.

In *The Australians*, aboriginal people had been firmly relegated to the past, and appear only once or twice at the beginning of the book in traditional, tribal roles. However, in *Southern Exposure* they are very much part of the present. Different individual aboriginal people are shown not only throwing spears, but also rounding up cattle on motorbikes, living in desert humpies and city slums and, in one startling image, arguing vehemently with a neo-Nazi at a political rally. In *Southern Exposure*, Australia was a land of irreconcilable oppositions.

Southern Exposure was printed entirely in black and white. Although this may well have been a cost consideration for a much less generously funded publication, Beal also took the opportunity to claim that colour was also a 'useless veneer' – perhaps another reply to Goodman's glossy Kodachrome images.[40] In contrast to Johnston's expansive, 'literary' and easy-going anecdotes, Horne's essays are densely written monologues, almost harangues. For Horne, following *The Lucky Country,* Australians were provincial, complacent and intolerant. Just a brief read through the chapter headings and subheadings is sufficient to give a flavour of the text:

40 – David Beal, 'Photographer's Note', in Horne and Beal, *Southern Exposure*, 143.

> A transported civilization – What the Australians brought with them
> Deserts of disaster – Australia's manic-depressive cycles
> The same but different – Australia as a province
> Life in the south-seas – Good time Australia
> Boxes of brick – Australia as a suburb
> Mates – The Australians as a folk
> Non-mates — The 'Blacks'
> Bosses – A crisis in leadership
> The new Australia – A freshening
> Existential Australia – A new style?[41]

41 – Horne and Beal, *Southern Exposure.*

The pre-publicity for this book was nowhere near as extensive as that for *The Australians*. In July 1967, the trade journal *Ideas* noted:

> Collins are very excited about this book and from what we can see have every reason to be. The photography is excellent and depicts the Australia that most of us know, rather than the Australia many publishers attempt to expose to the eyes of the world. […] Absent are the clichés; the overtones of self-congratulation are missing.[42]

42 – *Ideas* (July 1967), 1.

The Australian newspaper was also keen: 'Everything about it is brilliant, from its sardonic title and sleek presentation to its blistering essay and acute photographs'.[43] However, the book raised the hackles of *Walkabout*, the travel journal that had doyens from the travel industry on its board, and which had directly supported *The Australians*. They complained:

43 – 'Collins Books', *Ideas* (September 1967), 24.

> The spate of picture books seems to be running into side-channels, not without stirring up mud. *Southern Exposure* is an example. […] This new genre of picture-book, solidly established last year by *The Australians*, was given an impeccable and sophisticated pattern by George Johnston's text and Bob Goodman's pictures. A welling, wholesome sanguineness swept through it. Australian frailties were admitted with grace, but Johnston's pride in and Goodman's American admiration for a people who had tamed but had been simultaneously moulded by a fiercely raw nature, and from scruffy beginnings had built a nation with no small part in the world's affairs, arts, sciences and sports, seeped through unashamedly. Achievement was the keynote. [But] in [*Southern Exposure*], people will read what is tantamount to a lecture to Australians themselves from a superior posture of niggling, radical intellectualism. The Top People, gibes Donald Horne, have come to a dead end, and can't tell the rest what to do next. Australians are provincial, superficial, and existential, and they have lost the ability to 'conceptualise', raise issues

Figure 11. David Beal, untitled, ca. 1966. From David Beal and Donald Horne, *Southern Exposure*, Sydney: Collins 1967, 23.

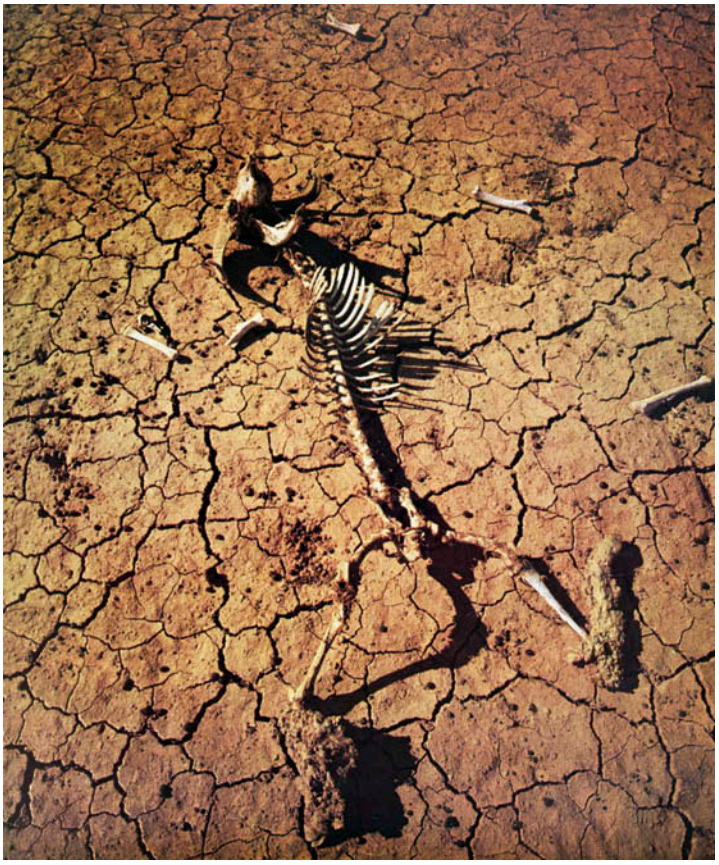

Figure 12. Robert Goodman, *Dead Ram, Witchelina Station, South Australia*, ca. 1964. From *The Australians,* Adelaide: Rigby 1966, 25.

> and find broad meaning [except] in action which is now a relief from meaning. They have become imitators and adapters. Even their individualism has become group individualism. They are more concerned with 'ordinariness' and mindless conformity.[44]

44 – *Walkabout* (September 1967), 41.

Not surprisingly, most Australians agreed with *Walkabout*'s assessment and were not going to pay good money to be insulted. The book did reach the bestseller list in September 1967, exactly one year after the spectacular debut of *The Australians*, but it stayed there only one month compared with Goodman's fourteen months. Nonetheless, it was clear from *Walkabout*'s vehement reaction that the agenda for photobooks had shifted from the purely promotional, where it had been for decades, to the personal and political.

Jeff Carter's Outback in Focus

Jeff Carter had cleared the equivalent of $3200 Australian dollars from his *National Geographic* assignment and, more importantly, the assignment had left him with a stock of three thousand colour slides to draw upon.[45] He produced *Outback in Focus* in 1968,[46] also published by Rigby, the publishers of *The Australians* (figure 13). This book enabled him to place the *National Geographic* slide stock and the work he had been doing on an almost weekly basis for the popular working-class men's magazines *Pix, People* and *Australasian-Post* into the expanded cultural context established by *The Australians* and *Southern Exposure*. Even some of his double-page magazine layouts could be directly transferred to book pages with higher quality printing. Unlike Goodman, the international sophisticate seeing with clarity into the national soul, or Beal, the angry young urban photographer, Carter was constructed as a rough-hewn, naïve natural, part of the landscape and people he photographed. As *The Australian* newspaper said: 'At a time when various writers are busily putting Australia and Australians under the sociological microscope, it's interesting to meet a man who's making money out of books about the old-fashioned Australian outdoors'.[47]

45 – 'Let's Take a Look at the Outback with a Man Called Carter', *The Australian* (21 June 1967), 16; and Jeff Carter, 'By Way of Explanation', in *Jeff Carter: Retrospective*, Frenchs Forest, Sydney: New Holland 2005, 9.

46 – Jeff Carter, *Outback in Focus*, Adelaide: Rigby 1968.

47 – 'Let's Take a Look at the Outback', 16.

But in fact, at this time, Carter's books had plenty to say about Australia and Australians, though not all of it was what people wanted to hear. *Outback in Focus* took as its topic Carter's favourite site – Central Australia. It valorised individual graziers, stockmen and fossickers, but took issue with the pastoral industry as a whole, which Carter accused of destroying the environment of Central Australia. He also critiqued the standard assimilationist trajectories espoused by magazines like *Walkabout*. In these comforting narratives, traditional Aborigines were noble, fascinating and grand, but they were inevitably the last of their generation. White education would produce new Aborigines fully functioning in white society, while still somehow preserving some residually quaint qualities of Aboriginality. Carter made it clear to his readers that this narrative could not play itself out while there was still social and economic exploitation in Central Australia.

By this time quasi 'anthropological' portraits, photographed against the plain backdrop of the sky and reminiscent of eugenic head specimens, had become a very popular graphic trope in many photobooks and magazines for the portrayal of aboriginal people. In 1935, Roy Dunstan, a photographer for the then new travel magazine *Walkabout*, had taken a bold low-angle portrait of Gwoja Tjungurrayi, known as 'One Pound Jimmy', east of Alice Springs in Central Australia near the camp of the anthropologist T. G. H. Strehlow. Once the portraits – featuring Tjungurrayi's sculptural features, tied-back tangle of hair, and deep-set eyes gazing into the distance – were published in the January 1936 edition of *Walkabout* with the caption 'The aboriginal, as seen by the early explorers', they were frequently copied and reproduced. In 1950, a close-up photograph was engraved for a popular stamp, captioned 'aborigine', and remained in circulation for the next sixteen years, until 1966.[48] At the same time, another quasi 'anthropological'

48 – Jillian E. Barnes, 'Resisting the Captured Image: How Gwoja Tjungurrayi, "One Pound Jimmy", escaped the "Stone Age"', in *Transgressions: Critical Australian Indigenous Histories*, ed. Ingereth Macfarlane and Mark Hannah, Canberra: ANU ePress 2007, 83–133.

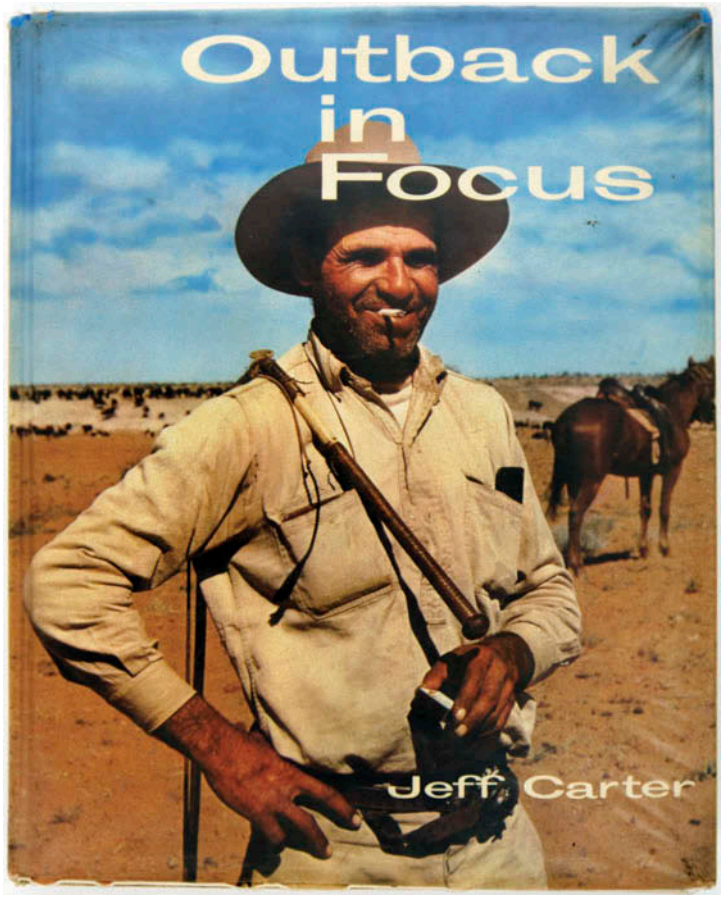

Figure 13. Jeff Carter, *Outback in Focus cover*, ca. 1967. From Jeff Carter, *Outback in Focus*, Adelaide: Rigby 1968.

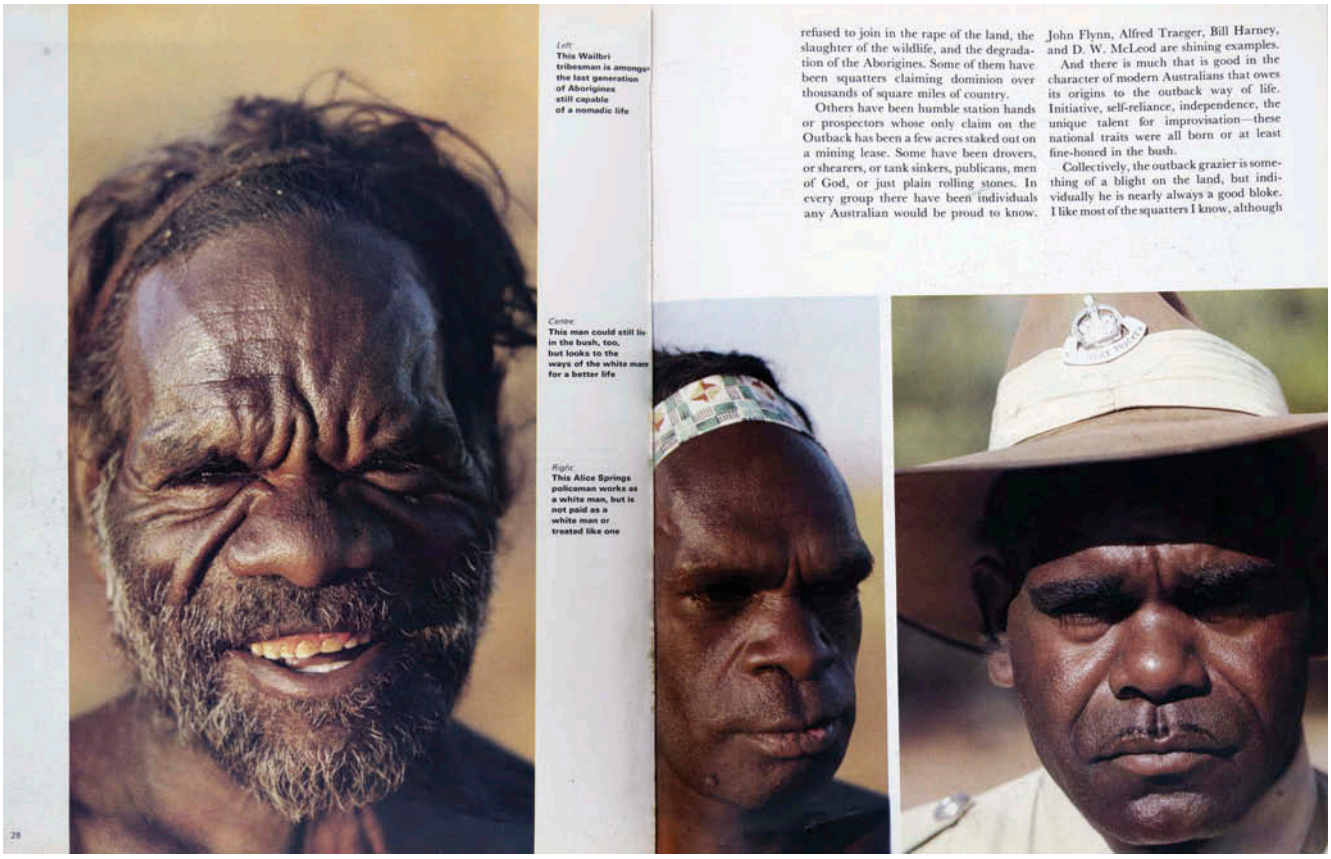
Left:
This Wailbri tribesman is amongst the last generation of Aborigines still capable of a nomadic life
Centre:
This man could still live in the bush, too, but looks to the ways of the white man for a better life
Right:
This Alice Springs policeman works as a white man, but is not paid as a white man or treated like one
refused to join in the rape of the land, the slaughter of the wildlife, and the degradation of the Aborigines. Some of them have been squatters claiming dominion over thousands of square miles of country.
Others have been humble station hands or prospectors whose only claim on the Outback has been a few acres staked out on a mining lease. Some have been drovers, or shearers, or tank sinkers, publicans, men of God, or just plain rolling stones. In every group there have been individuals any Australian would be proud to know. John Flynn, Alfred Traeger, Bill Harney, and D. W. McLeod are shining examples.
And there is much that is good in the character of modern Australians that owes its origins to the outback way of life. Initiative, self-reliance, independence, the unique talent for improvisation—these national traits were all born or at least fine-honed in the bush.
Collectively, the outback grazier is something of a blight on the land, but individually he is nearly always a good bloke. I like most of the squatters I know, although

Figure 14. Jeff Carter, untitled, ca. 1967. From Jeff Carter, *Outback in Focus*, Adelaide: Rigby 1968, 28–29.

technique of arraying figures or faces in comparative grids or rows had also become a popular graphic trope, used on any exotic species from opera dowagers to Aborigines. (An example is Harry Williamson's layout of Robert Goodman's photographs of women at the Melbourne Cup in *The Australians*.) In one double-page spread, Carter combines both these techniques to produce an arrayed layout of Aboriginal heads, which, at first glance, seems to present the standard assimilationist ascension to civilisation across the two pages (figure 14). Only the captions inform the reader that the author actually undermines such official narratives. From left to right, the captions read:

> This Wailbri tribesman is amongst the last generation of Aborigines still capable of a nomadic life.
> This man could still live in the bush too, but looks to the ways of the white man for a better life.
> This Alice Springs policeman works as a white man, but is not paid as a white man or treated like one.[49]

49 – Carter, *Outback in Focus*, 28–29.

On the page before Carter's subversive triptych another familiar image of a tousled-hair Aboriginal boy comes with the warning: 'Friendly, but doubtful now, this youngster's attitude to white men will almost inevitably harden into active dislike. The onus is squarely on the white man to win the respect and trust of the black minority'.

Walkabout, by now connoisseurs of travel books, praised Carter's proximity to their beloved outback. The journal commended the strong frontality of Carter's aboriginal heads – a style they themselves had popularised – while ignoring the acerbity of the captions:

> Some of his pictures here, in particular aboriginal portraits in colour, are magnificent. In flesh tint and texture, definition of form and line, use of light and projection of character they, in my view, transcend the mechanical and become Carter-creative. I have never seen better, nor such good reproduction by a Japanese printer.[50]

50 – *Walkabout* (August 1968), 39.

Perhaps because two years had elapsed since the publication of *The Australians*, and perhaps because Carter confined himself to the bush in his subject matter, *Walkabout* did not feel the need to take issue with his critiques of the outback as directly or vehemently as they had Beal's critiques of Australia as a whole. They let Carter's more pointed criticisms pass without comment:

> The author-photographer describes the aboriginal population as he knows it, and deplores the poor treatment they get, despite legislation to improve their lot and their pay. […] A lot of outback topics Carter writes about are well in focus, starkly defined indeed.[51]

51 – Ibid., 40.

Like *Southern Exposure* a year before, *Outback in Focus* spent just one month in the bestseller list in August 1968, but nonetheless it carried on the vivid conversation that *The Australians*, which still dominated the publishing landscape, had begun.

Australian Art and Artists: In the Making

In 1968, the writer Craig McGregor collaborated with the photographers David Moore and David Beal, as well as the designer Harry Williamson, on the largest and most technically ambitious book of the decade, as well as the biggest flop.[52] Ostensibly about the process of art making in Australia, from poetry to opera, and from painting to pottery, *Australian Art and Artists: In the Making* predicts the 1970s with its emphasis on Australia as a place of cultural creativity, and Australian artists as important to national identity. However, as a whole, it must have been an unsatisfying experience for the reader because the book was very much defined and dominated by Williamson's design. Compared with the robust simplicity of *The Australians, Australian Art and Artists* sometimes over-reached itself in its

52 – Craig McGregor, *Australian Art and Artists: In the Making*, Melbourne: Thomas Nelson 1969.

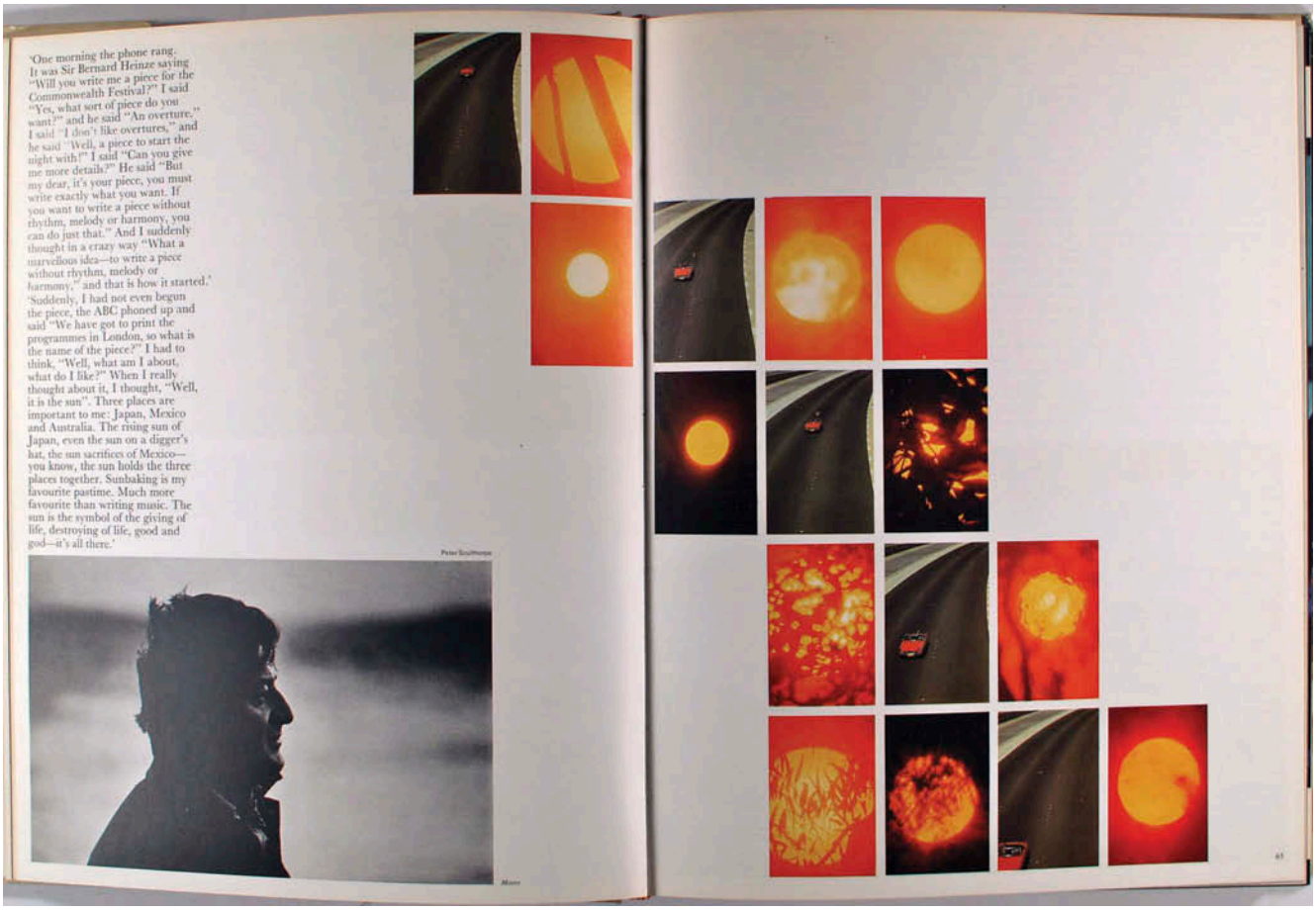
'One morning the phone rang.
It was Sir Bernard Heinze saying
"Will you write me a piece for the
Commonwealth Festival?" I said
"Yes, what sort of piece do you
want?" and he said "An overture,"
I said "I don't like overtures," and
he said "Well, a piece to start the
night with?" I said "Can you give
me more details?" He said "But
my dear, it's your piece, you must
write exactly what you want. If
you want to write a piece without
rhythm, melody or harmony, you
can do just that." And I suddenly
thought in a crazy way "What a
marvellous idea—to write a piece
without rhythm, melody or
harmony," and that is how it started.'
'Suddenly, I had not even begun
the piece, the ABC phoned up and
said "We have got to print the
programmes in London, so what is
the name of the piece?" I had to
think, "Well, what am I about,
what do I like?" When I really
thought about it, I thought, "Well,
it is the sun". Three places are
important to me: Japan, Mexico
and Australia. The rising sun of
Japan, even the sun on a digger's
hat, the sun sacrifices of Mexico—
you know, the sun holds the three
places together. Sunbaking is my
favourite pastime. Much more
favourite than writing music. The
sun is the symbol of the giving of
life, destroying of life, good and
god—it's all there.'

Figure 15. David Moore and David Beal, *Peter Sculthorpe*, ca. 1968. From Craig McGregor, *Australian Art and Artists: In the Making*, Melbourne: Thomas Nelson 1969, 64–65. Copyright permission courtesy Estate of David Moore.

complexity because the collage-like layout, with its lack of chapters and headings and sudden shifts in topic, was often bewildering.

The design subsumed the photographs themselves as well as the distinctive photographic styles of Moore and Beal. McGregor's stream-of-consciousness biographies of the sixty-two artists featured in the book (only four of whom were women) had an indulgent archness that failed to engage coherently with any larger issues of Australian culture of the time. The photographs were often repetitive in their documentation of the artist at work or, confusingly, they were used as abstract design elements to illustrate poems or pieces of music, or incorporated into the impressionist collages that regularly interrupt the book (figure 15). It was a giant book, and at $19.95 Australian dollars, a very expensive one, even if aimed at the aspirational coffee tables of the burgeoning inner cities. It seems to have never made it anywhere near the bestseller list; the limit of the market for Australiana photobooks had been reached.

Towards the 1970s

From the late 1960s, the number of photobooks taking the whole of Australia as their topic decreased. Some publishers, such as Southern Cross International, attempted to continue to ride the boom with books such as *Life in Australia* in 1968. Although this book used many of the same photographers, writers and designers as previous books, it had neither a big corporate budget nor the impetus to contribute anything new to the genre.[53] Other publishers occasionally tried to find new audiences by experimenting with updated perspectives on

53 – Craig McGregor and David Beal, *Life in Australia*, Sydney: Southern Cross International 1968.

Australian lifestyles.[54] Perhaps the last book aimed at a broad market and in the traditional style was *A Day in the Life of Australia*, initiated by another US photojournalist Rick Smolan, and published in 1981.[55] The outback adventures of travel writers such as Jeff Carter transmuted into the family television shows of the Leyland Brothers or the rollicking films of Albie Mangles, and a regenerated Australian film industry became the popular cultural arena where issues of Australian identity and the debates of 'new nationalism' were thrashed out.[56]

Nonetheless, a series of smaller though still significant photobooks were also published in the 1970s. While often driven by the photographers themselves and focusing on specific aspects and subcultures within Australian life, these photobooks continued the broad discussion initiated in the mid-1960s. For instance, Kings Cross in Sydney, the equivalent to London's Soho, had grown in cultural importance with the influx of US Servicemen on leave from the Vietnam War and with the rise of the counterculture in Australia. In Wes Stacey and Rennie Ellis's *Kings Cross Sydney: A Personal Look at the Cross* (1971) the young photographers took the reader into the strip-club dressing rooms and hippy pads of the area, using dynamic and tight picture groupings and pungently personal text, as Strizic had done eleven years earlier, to graphically illustrate the complete surface of each double-page spread. For instance, in one double-page spread a group of twenty differently sized images are clustered centrifugally, from largest to smallest, across both pages (figure 16).[57]

54 – For instance, the low-cost mass distribution British publisher Paul Hamlyn copied a book called *Birds of Britain* and produced a giant format 'Carnaby Street', 'Swinging London' style of book on young confident, 'liberated' Australian women with the punning title *Made in Australia*. See John D. Green, *Birds of Britain*, London: Bodley Head 1967; and David Mist and Len Evans, *Made in Australia*, Sydney: Hamlyn 1969.

55 – Rick Smolan and Andy Park, *A Day in the Life of Australia: Photographed by 100 of the World's Leading Photojournalists*, Sydney: A Day in the Life of Australia 1981.

56 – Jeff Carter's television series *Wild Country* (Seven Network) was made between 1972 and 1974; the Leyland Brothers' popular travel series was televised from 1976 to 1984 (Nine Network; Seven Network); and Albie Mangels's *World Safari* film was first released in 1976 (World Safari).

57 – Rennie Ellis and Wes Stacey, *Kings Cross Sydney: A Personal Look at the Cross*, Melbourne: Thomas Nelson 1971.

Figure 16. Wesley Stacey and Rennie Ellis, untitled, ca. 1970. From *Kings Cross Sydney: A Personal Look at the Cross*, Melbourne: Thomas Nelson 1971, 32–33.

Conclusion

Australia in the 1960s produced about sixty photobooks, which were not only important and formative collaborations between publishers, writers, artists and designers, but also engaged with real issues of the moment. They were produced for widely different purposes (from public relations to polemicism) and on widely different budgets (from generous corporate sponsorship to self-funded shoestrings), but for a few years they were released at such frequency, and were so widely read and reviewed across such a broad range of media, that they created a cultural dialogue between themselves about Australian identity within the 'new nationalism'. Although their quality varied, many deserve to be better known. In particular, *The Australians* and *Southern Exposure* remain as significant photographic and graphic design achievements as well as major contributions to important ongoing debates. However, within the histories of Australian modernity scant attention has been paid to book design in general, or photobooks in particular. Imagery from *The Australians* pervaded mid-1960s Australian visual culture, but a recent survey of modernism in Australia mentions it only in a footnote, disparagingly noting that it 'clogged second-hand bookshops for decades'.[58] Certainly, the iconography of *The Australians*, although an innovation on previous photobooks, was designed to please the mining, financial and travel companies that funded it, but its success nonetheless catalysed vibrant oppositional responses and its visual quality set a new benchmark. It is difficult to imagine that *Southern Exposure* would have been published without the precedent of *The Australians*, and some of Beal's acerbic images from that book were amongst the first prints purchased with funds from Kodak to found the National Gallery of Victoria's photography collection in 1969.[59]

58 – Stephen and Goad, 'Good Evening America', 227.

59 – Isobel Crombie, 'Introduction', in *2nd Sight: Australian Photography in the National Gallery of Victoria*, ed. Isobel Crombie and Susan van Wyck, Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria 2002, 6–12.

The photography boom of the 1970s is usually regarded as the watershed in postwar Australian photography. However, there are only a few significant photobooks from this period, most of which were produced by low-budget, countercultural publishers, such as Outback Press's *A Book About Australian Women* by Carol Jerrems, and the Australian Conservation Foundation's *Green Bans* by Marion Marrison.[60] In the 1970s younger photographers began for the first time to have access to galleries such as the Australian Centre for Photography in Sydney to hang their exhibitions, or state and federal museums, galleries and libraries to buy their prints. Aside from exhibition catalogues, photobooks in their own right became regarded as either expensive and risky if they were individual artist's books, or associated with outmoded genres, difficult modes of distribution, and the compromises of commercial collaboration if they were bigger projects. Yet the rise in the 1970s of the idea of the autonomous exhibition of photographic prints as the default form of photographic statement should not obscure the key role photographs on the book page played in the careers of photographers, as well as the crucial role Australiana played in national arguments over Australian identity and our place in the world, in the decade before. Turning the pages and reading the texts of these books still gives the reader a sense of an urgent and sophisticated debate between disparate photographers.

60 – Virginia Fraser and Carol Jerrems, *A Book About Australian Women*, North Fitzroy, Melbourne: Outback Press 1974; and Peter Manning and Marion Hardman, *Green Bans*, East Melbourne: Australian Conservation Foundation 1975.